



Second Session – Forty-Third Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

**Official Report
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Tom Lindsey
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Third Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
ASAGWARA, Uzoma, Hon.	Union Station	NDP
BALCAEN, Wayne	Brandon West	PC
BEREZA, Jeff	Portage la Prairie	PC
BLASHKO, Tyler	Lagimodière	NDP
BRAR, Diljeet	Burrows	NDP
BUSHIE, Ian, Hon.	Keewatinook	NDP
BYRAM, Jodie	Agassiz	PC
CABLE, Renée, Hon.	Southdale	NDP
CHEN, Jennifer	Fort Richmond	NDP
COMPTON, Carla	Tuxedo	NDP
COOK, Kathleen	Roblin	PC
CORBETT, Shannon	Transcona	NDP
CROSS, Billie	Seine River	NDP
DELA CRUZ, Jelynn	Radisson	NDP
DEVGAN, JD	McPhillips	NDP
EWASKO, Wayne	Lac du Bonnet	PC
FONTAINE, Nahanni, Hon.	St. Johns	NDP
GOERTZEN, Kelvin	Steinbach	PC
GUENTER, Josh	Borderland	PC
HIEBERT, Carrie	Morden-Winkler	PC
JOHNSON, Derek	Interlake-Gimli	PC
KENNEDY, Nellie, Hon.	Assiniboia	NDP
KHAN, Obby	Fort Whyte	PC
KINEW, Wab, Hon.	Fort Rouge	NDP
KING, Trevor	Lakeside	PC
KOSTYSHYN, Ron, Hon.	Dauphin	NDP
LAGASSÉ, Bob	Dawson Trail	PC
LAMOUREUX, Cindy	Tyndall Park	Lib.
LATHLIN, Amanda	The Pas-Kameesak	NDP
LINDSEY, Tom, Hon.	Flin Flon	NDP
LOISELLE, Robert	St. Boniface	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MARCELINO, Malaya, Hon.	Notre Dame	NDP
MOROZ, Mike, Hon.	River Heights	NDP
MOSES, Jamie, Hon.	St. Vital	NDP
MOYES, Mike, Hon.	Riel	NDP
NARTH, Konrad	La Vérendrye	PC
NAYLOR, Lisa, Hon.	Wolseley	NDP
NESBITT, Greg	Riding Mountain	PC
OXENHAM, Logan	Kirkfield Park	NDP
PANKRATZ, David	Waverley	NDP
PERCHOTTE, Richard	Selkirk	PC
PIWNIUK, Doyle	Turtle Mountain	PC
REDHEAD, Eric	Thompson	NDP
SALA, Adrien, Hon.	St. James	NDP
SANDHU, Mintu, Hon.	The Maples	NDP
SCHMIDT, Tracy, Hon.	Rossmere	NDP
SCHOTT, Rachelle	Kildonan-River East	NDP
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield-Ritchot	PC
SIMARD, Glen, Hon.	Brandon East	NDP
SMITH, Bernadette, Hon.	Point Douglas	NDP
STONE, Lauren	Midland	PC
WASYLIW, Mark	Fort Garry	Ind.
WHARTON, Jeff	Red River North	PC
WIEBE, Matt, Hon.	Concordia	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rick	Swan River	PC
<i>Vacant</i>	Spruce Woods	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 17, 2025

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Speaker: O Eternal and Almighty God, from Whom all power and wisdom come, we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our province. Grant, O merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy will, that we may seek it with wisdom, know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the glory and honour of Thy name and the welfare of all our people. Amen.

We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk nations. We acknowledge Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Please be seated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

House Business

Mr. Derek Johnson (Official Opposition House Leader): On House business.

The Speaker: The honourable Opposition House Leader, on House business.

Mr. Johnson: Pursuant to rule 34(8), I am announcing that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Thursday of a private members' business will be one put forward by the honourable member for Morden-Winkler (Mrs. Hiebert). The title of the resolution is Addictions Recovery and Treatment.

The Speaker: It has been announced that, pursuant to third-rule 34(8), that the private member's resolution to be considered on the next Thursday of private members' business will be the one put forward by the honourable member for Morden-Winkler. The title of the resolution is Addictions Recovery and Treatment.

* * *

Mr. Johnson: On House business, please.

The Speaker: The honourable Opposition House Leader, on House business.

Mr. Johnson: Yes, Honourable Speaker, if you could please call Bill 227, The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act.

The Speaker: Been announced that we will now proceed to second reading of Bill 227, The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 227—The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): I move, seconded by the member for Portage la Prairie (MLA Bereza), that Bill 227, The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Stone: Honourable Speaker, our PC team is taking action where this NDP government has failed. I am pleased to have introduced this timely and important bill for Manitoba, the free trade and labour mobility within Canada act.

The time is now to make a legislative commitment to removing trade barriers across our country and embracing labour mobility in Manitoba. The NDP has had ample time over the past number of months to bring forward similar legislation, but have failed to do so.

Industry, business leaders and Manitobans across our great province are calling for this legislation, and we are pleased to respond to that call.

As we know, interprovincial trade barriers have been a long-standing issue that has weakened Canada's economic independence and have limited our ability to do business within our own country. These barriers have impeded market access on goods and services, while limiting workers' ability to easily cross provincial borders for employment.

Differing provincial regulations on goods and services make it difficult for businesses to export their goods across the country, where it is often more

efficient and simpler to trade south of the border than to a neighbouring province.

In addition, differing certifications and licensing requirements across our provinces limit the mobility of workers. This is what this bill hopes to address. This bill will enshrine Manitoba's commitment to removing those interprovincial trade barriers and embraces labour mobility with any reciprocating jurisdiction in Canada. Although interprovincial trade barriers have been a long-standing challenge, this bill is timely, as there is a renewed commitment from political leaders across our country to eliminate these trade barriers.

Several provinces have already begun this process. As I mentioned, the NDP has had ample time to bring legislation like this forward, but has failed to make any meaningful commitments, as has become a pattern with this NDP government. They are all talk and no action; all words and no follow-through. They will stand in front of a camera and talk about trade barriers, but they will lack the follow-through and they fail to commit in any meaningful way. And this is exactly what we have seen when it comes to Manitoba's trade strategy or lack thereof, Honourable Speaker.

As a result, Manitoba is behind other provinces. The US and China tariffs have brought our need to reduce our reliance on foreign markets and to support the goods, services and people that make our province and our country great.

An RBC analysis has shown that internal trade barrier costs are greater for smaller provinces like Manitoba, and those provinces could experience larger gains in GDP per capita and employment, with the removal of non-geographic trade barriers.

As mentioned earlier, this NDP has had ample time to address this and bring forward legislation and have failed to follow through on this, and, as a result, Manitoba is behind other provinces in this country.

Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston's paved the road in February by passing very similar legislation to Bill 227 that we have brought forward today. Again, last week, Prince Edward Island introduced similar legislation to eliminate unnecessary barriers to trade and labour mobility with reciprocating jurisdictions—again, very consistent with the legislation we have brought forward. And just yesterday, Premier Doug Ford tabled their legislation that would dismantle Ontario's trade barriers with reciprocating provinces.

In fact, Ontario has signed an MOU with Nova Scotia and with Prince Edward Island because they have legislation in place. So Manitoba, again, has been left behind because this Premier (Mr. Kinew) has failed to take action on this issue, has failed to take this issue seriously and failed to bring forward meaningful legislation to date.

* (10:10)

At a time of market volatility and economic uncertainty with our largest trading partner, it would be irresponsible of this NDP government not to support this bill that we have brought forward. Other provinces are legislating their 'commitments' to removing barriers and embracing labour mobility, and it's time that this NDP government gets on board.

Manitoba is one of the provinces that could have the most to gain. According to federal estimates, eliminating interprovincial trade barriers could boost the Canadian economy by \$200 billion and lower prices by up to 15 per cent. In a report released by the Montreal Economic Institute in 2021, had barriers been completely removed, Manitoba's GDP per capita would be nearly \$5,000 higher compared to the status quo. Each person in Manitoba could be \$5,000 richer if Manitoba eliminates these interprovincial trade barriers. This is why it is so puzzling, Honourable Speaker, that this NDP is not moving forward on this issue.

In fact, in their most recent budget, the NDP government actually implied that labour mobility threatens Manitoba jobs despite that we have a skilled worker shortage here in Manitoba, and while labour mobility is one of the greatest barriers to interprovincial trade in Manitoba, but it's one where Manitoba could benefit the most. So the NDP's budget is saying the exact opposite of what this NDP and this Premier is saying in front of the cameras.

Experts have said that Manitoba is one of the provinces with the most to gain by removing barriers to labour mobility. The increased competition could drive wages up while we could see a net increase in jobs that we greatly need here in the province.

The NDP have clearly missed the mark again and their ideology is getting in the way of Manitoba's true economic potential. With the 'current' environment of global trade and continued economic uncertainty for our province, it would be irresponsible of this NDP government to not support this bill today and to fast-track it for passage in this spring session.

This is, Honourable Speaker, a non-partisan bill that will benefit all Manitobans. It will benefit Manitoba businesses and will address the labour shortages that we are seeing and that we in Manitoba are having challenges filling.

So if this NDP government truly does support removing interprovincial trade barriers for Manitoba, if what's their—if what they are saying in the media is in fact true, then they should vote for this bill today and fast-track it for passage in this spring session as other provinces have done.

I want to make it very clear, Honourable Speaker, that this bill is directly related to reciprocating jurisdictions that are also removing their trade barriers. So Manitoba, under the leadership of Brian Pallister, passed the new west trade partnership a few years ago, which significantly improved our trade of goods, services and manufactured products across our provinces to the west.

However, we do still have a significant amount of barriers out east. And with Premier Doug Ford introducing their legislation yesterday, the time is now for Manitoba to pass this bill as it would then be a reciprocating jurisdiction.

So as I've mentioned, Honourable Speaker, if this NDP government truly does support removing interprovincial trade barriers and they do truly support embracing labour mobility to fill those skilled worker shortages that we are seeing here in Manitoba, then they should pass this bill today and fast-track it for passage in this spring session.

As I mentioned, this is a non-partisan bill. We need to stand together. If this NDP government truly wants to be a part of team Canada, then join other premiers and other leaders across this country in passing this type of legislation as those other premiers have already done. Let us stand united to boost our economic growth, to create jobs and to build a more prosperous, united Canadian economy.

Honourable Speaker, I will again reiterate that this legislation is timely. There is a renewed commitment to reducing interprovincial trade barriers and embracing labour mobility. And it's time that this NDP government gets on board.

Questions

The Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held. Questions may be addressed to the sponsoring member by any member in the following sequence: first question to be asked by a member from

another party; this is to be followed by a rotation between the parties; each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

The floor is now open for questions.

MLA Carla Compton (Tuxedo): Our government is proud to say that we're advocating for Manitoban jobs and our economy. After Brian Pallister's government closed down the Washington trade office, we are proud to be reinstating it.

Can the member opposite explain why that decision was made to close that with our largest trading partner and how that was supportive of Manitoba and our economy and how is that an effective trade strategy?

Mrs. Lauren Stone (Midland): Honourable Speaker, just to set the record straight, there was no physical office in DC, so there was nothing to officially close. Premier Brian Pallister, former premier of Manitoba, made incredible headways in reducing interprovincial trade barriers across our country by signing on to the new west trade partnership which then this NDP government did not support.

So if this Premier (Mr. Kinew) is actually serious about expanding our trade across the country to reduce our reliance on the US and on international markets, then they should have no problem supporting this bill today.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): I want to congratulate the member from Midland for bringing this important bill at such—and time is of the essence on this bill. So when we talk, Honourable Speaker, when we talk about this bill, why is it needed right now at this time?

Mrs. Stone: I appreciate the question from my colleague here, who also seconded this bill because he knows—as well as all of my colleagues on this side of the House know—how critical it is to put a commitment in legislation, to enshrine a commitment to remove interprovincial trade barriers.

Experts have said that, by removing interprovincial trade barriers, it could boost the Canadian economy by up to \$200 billion. If the past few months have shown anything, it's that Canada needs to have economic independence, and we need to reduce our reliance on foreign markets.

And this is exactly what this bill addresses. It ensures that we have the ability to trade across our provincial borders and to do business in our own country.

MLA Compton: This bill greatly impacts businesses and labour in our province and can have long-lasting effects on our economy and the workforce in Manitoba, like previous cuts made to our health-care system impacting the health-care-worker workforce.

So my question to the member opposite is, who did they consult while creating this bill?

Mrs. Stone: The member for Tuxedo (MLA Compton) is right that this will greatly impact businesses and Manitobans in the country in a positive way, and this is what experts are saying. Industry groups across the province and across Canada have called for this type of legislation to be implemented and we are answering that call.

We have consulted with the chambers of commerce. We've consulted with business groups and industry leaders who support the passage of this bill. In fact, the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce signed an open letter with other chambers across the country, calling on premiers to put in this type of legislation to remove interprovincial trade barriers.

In addition, the Canadian federation for independent business actually put out a statement this week in support of the bill that we have brought forward. Manitobans—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

Mr. Wayne Balcaen (Brandon West): As the member from Midland has articulated, this is a very important bill that's going to impact our economy and bring great economic impacts to Manitoba.

So I'm wondering if the member could answer, why hasn't the Kinew government introduced an interprovincial free trade bill like this of their own?

Mrs. Stone: I thank my colleague for that question, and, you know, that's a question that I have as well. Over the past number of weeks that we've been sitting in this Legislature, we, in fact, have asked the Premier (Mr. Kinew) if he was going to be bringing legislation like this forward following the successes of Nova Scotia and PEI, and we did not get a response.

This seems like a logical bill to bring forward. As I mentioned, it is non-partisan; it is timely and time is of the essence to have this. And this is why, if this NDP government is truly in favour of removing interprovincial trade barriers, then they'll support this bill today and fast-track it for passage this spring session.

* (10:20)

MLA Compton: On this side of the House, Honourable Speaker, we're—we've been very clear since the beginning: we're on team Canada. With the tariffs coming from Trump—from the Trump administration, we've got to keep a united front and support our fellow Manitobans and Canadians.

My question to the member opposite is, why did the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan) thank Donald Trump from—these tariffs, and does she share his belief?

Mrs. Stone: Honourable Speaker, this member opposite knows that that is not true. We have stood up time and time again in this House and in this Legislature questioning those decisions from US and China.

We can't forget about China. I know the members opposite want to shine a light on the US, but the fact is that we're in a trade war with two different jurisdictions right now and Manitoba is struggling as a result of that. But this is exactly why we are bringing this legislation forward.

So I ask the member, if she truly believes that we should have less reliance on the US market, then will she support this bill that we've brought forward today?

MLA Bereza: Honourable Speaker, we have both—or we have all seen in this House the request from KAP, Keystone agriculture producers, wanting this Free Trade Agreement and this trade agreement in-between provincial governments.

How much will this mean for the Manitoba and Canadian economy?

Mrs. Stone: Yes, I thank my colleague for the question and, like him, both of us have spent predominantly—majority of our careers within the agriculture sector, so we know how much of a positive impact this would have for Manitoba farmers, but also for Manitoba agri-food businesses, in general, to be able to ship our goods east and west a lot easier with the removal of these exceptions and restrictions on our trade within our province of Manitoba.

So, as I mentioned, experts have said that this could boost the Canadian economy by \$200 billion, and Montreal Economic Institute has said that this could add \$5,000 into the pocket of every single Manitoban if we were to move forward with eliminating trade barriers within Manitoba and across Canada with reciprocating jurisdictions.

MLA Compton: Manitoba is known for its strong labour and environmental standards.

Can the member opposite tell us whether this bill puts these high standards at risk?

Mrs. Stone: I thank the member for the question and, you know, I hope that she actually did read the bill because no, it does not put any sort of standards at risk. All this does is it speeds up and streamlines the process for people to be able to move into Manitoba.

And I know the member opposite comes from the health-care sector. She knows that we have a health-care shortage right now, and so I would fully anticipate that they would support more nurses and more health-care professionals coming into the province of Manitoba. Does she not want us to speed up that process?

Mr. Balcaen: Again, the member from Midland brings forward a fantastic bill for Manitobans to benefit from. Not only Manitobans, but Canadians. And I heard the member from Tuxedo say that we stand on team Canada. Speaking of team Canada, does the federal government support this?

Mrs. Stone: Yes, the federal government supports this. In fact, all political leaders across this great country are supporting the removal of interprovincial trade barriers. And, as I've mentioned, those leaders have already taken—those premiers across the country have already taken those steps to implement legislation to enshrine that commitment in their provinces.

That's where this Premier (Mr. Kinew) has failed because he has failed to bring forward legislation. We've seen Nova Scotia, PEI, British Columbia and, as of yesterday, Ontario bring forward legislation to enshrine that commitment.

Will this NDP government step up to the plate, support this bill and show that they really, truly are committed to removing interprovincial trade barriers across this country, because if they don't support it, then it's all words and—

The Speaker: Member's time has expired.

MLA Compton: Canadians and Manitobans have stood strong in the face of Trump's tariff tax. Canada will always be the true north, strong and free.

Can the member opposite please tell the House whether she agrees with the good people of Manitoba or the member for Borderland (Mr. Guenter), who wants Canada to become the 51st state?

Mrs. Stone: Honourable Speaker, as I've said time and time again in this House, I am against tariffs. Free trade is the best approach, which is exactly why we

are bringing this bill forward, because it enhances free trade in our country so we reduce our reliance—our foreign reliance on countries like the US and like China that have tariffs that are impacting Manitobans and Manitoba businesses as we speak.

I question why this member does not seem to support a bill like this. If her Premier and if her government truly support Canadian economic independence, then they should support this bill today and they should fast-track it for spring session.

The Speaker: The time for questions has ended.

Debate

The Speaker: The floor is now open for debate.

Hon. Jamie Moses (Minister of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation): I'm glad to put some words on the record with respect to Bill 227, Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act.

And, being very clear, our government supports free trade, you want to advance free trade. We're very proud to be the leader in the nation when it comes to the least amount of trade barriers, very happy about that record and we want to make sure that we continue to be a leader when it comes to growing our economy and reducing those trade barriers. We've been working diligently with our federal and territorial partners over the past year to make sure that we do the work of bringing some of those trade barriers down.

So even before the US—current US President Donald Trump was in office, we were meeting with our partners around the country to work on projects that would strengthen our united Canadian economy. And so I know that there are, you know, a lot of discussion with this right now, in the face of the tariff threat from Donald Trump and the tariff threat from China.

But it's important to be clear that our government has prioritized growing our economy and reducing barriers before this even was a mainstream issue, talked about every day in the news or around the dinner table. And so for us, we've been working in unison with our colleagues around the country on some very specific areas, one on—around labour mobility, one around harmonization and mutual recognition of goods and services and also to make sure that we actually promote free trade and trade missions, and understanding how we can strengthen our supply chains as well.

So I can talk a little about that work that we've done and I'm happy to represent Manitoba on that

table of federal, provincial and territorial leads on trade at that—on that national scene. And so that is the CIT table, council of internal trade. And those ministers, we do terrific work. We've been work—united and push aggressively to actually put down standards, work on projects and unite our economy, understanding that there are a variety, countless number of regulations and procedures and rules in each jurisdiction that vary, and understanding how we can harmonize those in a way that respects the independent authority of jurisdictions around the country but also allows the free flow of goods, services, labour across the country and still, at the same time, maintaining a high standard.

And so, for us, we are very focused on getting the job done and we absolutely support free trade and advancing those efforts here. So before President Trump was sworn in and this was a hot topic, we were already working on a trucking pilot. I'm very happy to make sure that Manitoba was one of the lead provinces that signed on to supporting a nationwide trucking project, which would harmonize the standards for trucking and transport trailers right across the nation.

This is an important work, because we know that the flow of goods from—whether it's coming from the Port of Vancouver, the Port of Montreal, is an essential part of getting goods right across this country. This is the work that we're doing.

So as we signed on to this project and being one of the leaders in doing so, we are advocating for that flow of goods and reducing those barriers to make sure that trucks aren't stopped on a provincial border because of regulations that are unneeded. At the same time, we understand that our geographical differences to some of the roads and highways, whether that's the mountains in BC or across in the Prairies or in—throughout Quebec and the Maritimes. So we have to respect that as well and understand how we can do that in the most effective way.

* (10:30)

And at the same time, we understand that it's important for us to understand how we move with goods and services and understanding that there are differences in packaging and differences in labelling between provinces and territories. And we want and are going to, and we're aiming to be a leader in terms of understanding how we can harmonize those rules with the same respect that we have for other jurisdictions, provinces and territories in Canada, with language rights and the ability to get things done in a way that is—works for all provinces and territories.

Manitoba is going to continue to lead on that and we're very happy to be a forceful voice around that table.

And when it comes to labour mobility, deputy Speaker—or Honourable Speaker, I think it's very important for us to understand that we want Manitobans, Canadians, to have the freedom to work across the province, to use their knowledge, their skills, their experience to benefit growing our national economy. And we're very fortunate in Manitoba to have one of the strongest workforce bases in the country. And I call us the leader in specialized manufacturing in the country, the national leader in specialized manufacturing.

I think we do tremendous work here, whether it's from our agriculture sector, whether it's from transportation sector where we are a hub being in the centre of the country, or whether it's the fact that we have a northern port where we can use that to grow our economy. And as we break down trade barriers, we will then be able to leverage that, leverage the tools we have in the western provinces and throughout BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba—to leverage all of those goods to put through our Port of Churchill so that we can access markets around the world faster, more affordable, giving ourselves the competitive advantage that we didn't otherwise have. That's why our government is so happy to continue to make that investment in the Port of Churchill and support our Manitoba economy, our western Canadian and our entire Canadian economy.

Honourable Speaker, it's also important to note that I think these—as I mentioned earlier, this issue is coming to light because we know the tariff threat from China, from the United States of America, is real. It's impacting our economy. And that's why it's important for us to continue to grow our economy together as Canadians, united front, and not play into the rhetoric that we're hearing from members opposite.

The really, you know, unfortunate rhetoric, where we are perhaps endorsing Donald Trump or we're even thanking him for his tariffs, I think that's really sad because there's a lot of strong business owners that I know in Manitoba that I've heard from directly that are impacted in a severe way by the tariffs or the threat of tariffs. And I also know that there's no business for Manitobans thanking Donald Trump for those tariffs. And so it's incumbent on members opposite to think about the colleagues that are using that rhetoric and whether they should be calling out those members who do such things. And I think that I would urge them to take that step so we can continue to be united

as Manitobans and united as Canadians to face the threat of Donald Trump's tariffs in a united front. And I think that is one of our strongest assets, doing so in unity.

And so I think it's very important for us and work that I've been doing to work alongside Premier Houston, who I've had a chance to meet personally and discuss the issues around interprovincial trade barriers, and Premier Ford, who I've had a chance to meet last month, and we discussed interprovincial trade barriers and understanding how we can continue to work together to grow our economies and break down those very barriers which we're discussing here today.

So this work is ongoing. It's ongoing in a real and meaningful way. And it's important for Manitobans to know and understand that our government is taking this issue very seriously. We're making real and meaningful progress on this. We are not distracted by harmful rhetoric coming from members opposite and previous decisions that, quite frankly, our Manitoba economy has been paying for, for years; decisions like closing down the US trade office is a decision that our economy is still reeling from.

This is our largest trading partner; 70 per cent, over 70 per cent of our exports in Manitoba go down to the United States of America. Doesn't it make sense for us to have a good trading relationship?

There is a very positive—a very popular saying that is, you must relate before you negotiate. And how are we supposed to relate if we don't have a trade office there to build connections, to build that understanding with our American partners, whether that's visiting our folks—our friends in North Dakota or Minnesota, Illinois, or Nashville in Tennessee, California—these are all places who have massive economies that help to fuel the work that's done here by everyday Manitobans.

And so as we continue to be a leader when it comes to breaking down interprovincial trade barriers, as it comes to being a leader around—in the country when it comes to growing our economy, we'll do that work in partnership with our colleagues around the country. We'll do so in partnership with Manitoba businesses. We'll do so in a way that helps all workers in Manitoba because, at the end of the day, we need workers to be putting their time, their talent, their energy into building this great province, into building this great nation.

And I'm so glad to stand up to put these words on the record on behalf of all Manitobans.

MLA Jeff Bereza (Portage la Prairie): Once again, I want to thank the member for Midland (Mrs. Stone) to bringing this important bill forward today, and how important it is to fast-track this bill and get it moving.

Honourable Speaker, 78 per cent—78 per cent—of the pea protein that is manufactured in Portage la Prairie goes to the United States. They're contacting me and saying that business is gone, that business is gone unless we can move it to other provinces or other territories—78 per cent; 50 people will be out of work because we don't want to make this happen.

When we look at the trucking industry, the restrictions across borders when we're trying to move products from one province to the other, when we look at the agriculture business, which I was in when the Free Trade Agreement first come out, we need to look for other markets, and the best place to look for those markets are from within.

When we look at some of the products that are impacted by this, we've heard from the potato industry here of cuts up to 30 per cent in Manitoba on our potato industry. If we are not looking to other provinces where we can move things like potatoes, peas, canola, then we are going to miss out on opportunities, and it is not just about products and it is not just about one year. When we lose that potato production, we have to earn it back.

What is this government across the aisle doing to earn any of that back? This is a non-partisan issue, as the member from Midland has also discussed.

Last year, when we were going—had the opportunity in the invite to go down to the United States and meet with different legislators, governors, senators, members of the Congress about agriculture, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kostyshyn) spoke and said, we're not going to do it.

We begged three different times to make sure that our government and our opposition was represented properly at events like this. We met with as many people as we could, and I was proud to stand, not only to sing O Canada, to show them how important Canada is to our country, but also to show how important that our products are to our country.

* (10:40)

Keystone agriculture producers has been begging the government to open up interprovincial barriers, and still nothing. When we talk about canola and interprovincial between Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, we are the lion's share in the world of canola

production, and we have to be looking at opportunities within our own province and within our western provinces as well, too, to be able to crush these products and make it into soil-soy meal, canola meal and oil that we can use not only within our province but within other provinces here.

This government seems to be making unilateral decisions on how agriculture products will be used and not used. And again, that's seen by companies like Avina. But it's not just them; it's companies like fertilizer companies, like Koch in Brandon, Manitoba, that is one of the largest employers, not only in Manitoba but in Canada.

I want to let the other side of the bench know Koch—the Koch plant that is in Brandon, Manitoba, comes from Italy. That comes from Italy because they could not make a go of it there. Are we not concerned that that plant could move away, and by imposing these barriers and not wanting to trade within Canada, we are leaving that up to fate?

And when we hear about Donald Trump and the rhetoric that is coming from the other side about that, is there any more unilateral decisions that can be made by this Premier (Mr. Kinew) to not want to deal interprovincially? When we talk about agriculture that I feel comfortable talking about, and we hear of talks with meeting with Minister Houston, when we hear about talks with meeting with the people from the United States, that doesn't mean joining them at the state fair. It's about finding new business opportunities that we have.

I don't—I want to make sure that we get to a vote on this today so that we can fast-track this, so I'll just say this: This is a non-partisan issue. This affects every Manitoban. Let's get this done; let's open up these provincial barriers.

Thank you so much.

MLA Robert Loiselle (St. Boniface): Honourable Speaker, great news: Manitoba is open for business and we're going to build, build, build.

In fact, Honourable Speaker, Manitoba has been open for business since time immemorial and I really want to, you know, shed light on the fact that, for time immemorial for thousands of years, First Nations have been trading across this great continent. And the Red River Métis, also very entrepreneurial, were the kings of the prairies and used to trade north, south, east, west, and that spirit, actually, is what brought Manitoba into Confederation.

So we're going to build, build, build. It's in our budget. I don't know if the MLA for Midland has had the chance to read the budget, or anyone on that side, for that matter. It's education week; I don't know what the literacy level is on that side, but I encourage them to read the budget.

And I really want to thank the Premier for the leadership that he's taken on this file. He's on team Canada, we're on team Canada. I also want to thank the minister of business, the Minister of Finance (MLA Sala); they've been doing great, great work.

And, honestly, Honourable Speaker, we are on the side of Manitobans. We're going to invest in \$3.7 billion of infrastructure projects to build up our *économie [economy]*, or economy, here in Manitoba, and that's what we're all about. In fact, we're the keystone province. We have been for 155 years. We've been trading east and west for that long, and that's why, 100 years ago, we were known as the Paris of the north, the Chicago of the north.

But, you know, it doesn't take much imagination—and I know that sometimes things that come out of that side of the Chamber baffle even the most vivid of imaginations, but we're a Maritime province. We're a Maritime province, Honourable Speaker, and we're involved right now in nation building. In fact, the leader of Nunavut was here just yesterday, and we're going to build, build, build trade corridors east and west as well as with Nunavut.

We're going to bring clean hydro power to Nunavut. While the members on the other side are talking about like: let's build pipelines, we need pipelines, we need them now, it's like, you know, we need to get on this now. Let's build a clean economy, right? Because, once again, the one-dimensional thinking that goes on on that side baffles even the most vivid of imagination. In fact, I don't even know if it's one dimension—one-dimensional, I think it's negative dimensional, right?

And it's funny when we hear about, oh, it's urgent, it's urgent, we need to get on this. Yes, it's urgent. It's urgent that we work together to build our economy. And what I really enjoy about this building, in fact, and every time I come up to this building, I see the Golden Boy facing north. Why? Because our resources, our minerals, our ports; it's all in northern Manitoba. And I think that members on the other side will appreciate that the backside of the Golden Boy, the rump, faces in the general direction of Mr. Trump. And I think that's very apropos right now, where we're at, here, at this time in the history of Manitoba.

So we're a Maritime province and I think the fact that our Premier (Mr. Kinew), our minister of business, our Minister of Finance (MLA Sala) and the rest of our team are working on a one Manitoba, team Manitoba approach. That's how we're going to get things done.

Mais, Monsieur l'Honorable Président, les tarifs imposés par le gouvernement américain constituent une attaque contre le Canada et contre le Manitoba. Et nous devons protéger notre économie avec une approche d'équipe Canada, une approche canadienne.

Alors que l'ancien gouvernement PC, qui a échoué, a nui aux entreprises manitobaines, nous avons toujours défendu l'engagement du Manitoba à maintenir un front uni. Notre gouvernement néo-démocrate continuera toujours à se battre pour protéger les emplois ici au Manitoba et bâtir une meilleure économie afin que tous les Manitobains puissent mener une vie de qualité.

Nous nous engageons à collaborer avec les autres provinces, comme le fait notre Premier ministre et le gouvernement fédéral, pour éliminer les obstacles au commerce interprovincial. Nous veillerons également à donner la priorité aux entreprises canadiennes, grâce à notre loi sur l'achat canadien.

Notre équipe est procanadienne; les Conservateurs sont pro-Trump. Dès le premier jour de la guerre tarifaire de Trump, le député de Fort Whyte (M. Khan) a remercié – a loufoqué – a remercié le président Trump pour les avoir imposés. Il a déclaré : Trump voulait une victoire. Et je pense qu'une de ses victoires évidentes, et aussi pour beaucoup de Canadiens, c'était un changement de gouvernement fédéral. Il voulait que JT parte et, Dieu merci, il est parti. Alors quelle influence a eu la menace des tarifs à 25 pour cent là-dessus? Je dirais : beaucoup. Et je dirais merci. Je dirais merci qu'il est parti. Et ce, du député de Fort Whyte qui a remercié le président Trump pour son ingérence dans la politique canadienne. C'est dur à croire, Monsieur l'Honorable Président.

Ensuite, le député de La Vérendrye (M. Narth) a rompu avec notre approche d'Équipe Canada et a rejoint celle du député de Fort Whyte, écrivant que nous ne devrions pas imposer de contre-tarifs, parce que la seule certitude que l'on peut tirer des représailles, c'est qu'elles pousseront le président à augmenter les tarifs dans les jours à venir. Incroyable. Incroyable. Et ce, du député de La Vérendrye.

Et ses propres électeurs – ses propres électeurs de La Vérendrye n'étaient pas d'accord. Dans une lettre

ouverte, Meinrad Signer de Kleefeld (Manitoba) dans la circonscription de La Vérendrye, a écrit : Puisque nous connaissons la tempête économique se dirige contre notre pays dans le but de nous soumettre, nous avons deux façons de réagir : avec faiblesse ou avec force. Le député de La Vérendrye recommande la faiblesse. Notre gouvernement prend une approche procanadienne, une approche manitobaine, et nous allons bâtir, bâtir, bâtir.

*(10:50)

Alors, ensuite, parlons du député de Brandon Ouest (M. Balcaen) a annoncé un partenariat avec une organisation pro-Trump, qui a récemment déclaré : Loué soit le Seigneur, Alléluia. Trump et ce, du député de Brandon Ouest. Absolument époustouflant, Monsieur l'Honorable Président. Absolument même, si j'ose le dire, ridicule.

Notre gouvernement est un leader et s'engage à réduire les barrières commerciales interprovinciales comme un outil clé pour répondre aux tarifs de Trump. Nous ouvrons la voie pour créer davantage d'emplois au Manitoba pour s'assurer que les Manitobains et les Manitobaines ont accès à de bons emplois pour bâtir une économie encore plus forte.

Voici certaines des mesures que nous prenons : collaboration avec d'autres provinces. On voit que notre Premier ministre y est souvent au travail, et nous allons collaborer sur les ventes bilatérales directes de boissons alcoolisées aux consommateurs, priorisant de la reconnaissance mutuelle pour réduire la paperasserie inutile. Et nous allons travailler avec d'autres juridictions pour alléger le fardeau administratif et adopter une norme nationale de services pour la mobilité de la main-d'œuvre. C'est le travail que nous allons faire.

Nous avons la plus faible – le plus faible nombre d'exemptions de toutes les juridictions au Manitoba, et nous continuons à réduire celles-ci pour améliorer le commerce interprovincial et faire croître l'économie du Manitoba. Une économie d'ailleurs, et les membres de l'autre côté de la Chambre devraient le savoir, une économie qui est non seulement bilingue, mais qui peut travailler avec d'autres économies, d'autres pays, avec l'Union européenne. D'ailleurs, les ambassadeurs de l'Union européenne étaient ici tout dernièrement, et ils nous ont demandé : Quand est-ce qu'on peut s'attendre à d'autres échanges commerciaux avec l'Europe ?

Alors nous sommes ouverts, d'est en ouest, nord, sud, nous sommes même ouverts avec d'autres

continents, d'autres économies émergentes, et c'est cette approche que nous allons prendre. Je m'imagine que les membres de l'autre côté de la Chambre en ce moment se sentent très vulnérables, parce qu'ils savent qu'ils sont en train de perdre la bataille. Les Manitobains ne sont pas en train de les écouter. Nous avons le Premier ministre (M. Kinew) le plus populaire au Canada en ce moment.

Les Manitobains et les Manitobaines sont à l'écoute de nos travaux et nous sommes à l'écoute des Manitobains et des Manitobaines aussi. Alors, merci l'Honorable Président, et encore une fois, nous allons bâtir, bâtir, bâtir un meilleur Manitoba pour tous les Manitobains.

Merci, l'Honorable Président.

Translation

But, Honourable Speaker, the tariffs imposed by the US government are an attack on Canada and Manitoba. And we need to protect our economy with a Team Canada approach, a made-in-Canada approach.

While the previous failed PC government hurt Manitoba businesses, we have always stood up for Manitoba's commitment to maintaining a united front. Our NDP government will continue to fight to protect jobs here in Manitoba and build a better economy so that all Manitobans can live a quality life.

We are committed to working with the other provinces, as our Premier (Mr. Kinew) and the federal government are doing, to eliminate inter-provincial trade barriers. We will also ensure that Canadian companies are given priority through our Buy Canadian legislation.

Our team is pro-Canada, the Conservatives are pro-Trump. On day one of Trump's tariff war, the member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Khan) thanked—and this is goofy—thanked President Trump for taxing us. He said, Trump wanted a win. And I think one of his obvious victories, and also for a lot of Canadians, was a change in the federal government. He wanted JT gone and thank God he's gone. So, how much of an influence the 25 per cent tariff threat had on that, I would say a lot. And I would say thank you, I would say thank you, he's gone now. And this from the member for Fort Whyte, who thanked President Trump for his interference in Canadian politics. It is hard to believe, Honourable Speaker.

Then the member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth) broke with our Team Canada approach and echoed that of

the member for Fort Whyte, writing that we should not impose reciprocal tariffs because the only certainty we can draw from retaliation, is that it will cause the President to raise tariffs in the days ahead. Incredible. Unbelievable. And this from the member for La Vérendrye.

His own constituents in the riding of La Vérendrye disagreed. In an open letter, Meinrad Signer of Kleefeld, Manitoba, in the riding of La Vérendrye, wrote: Since we know the economic storm heading against our country with the goal to get us into submission, we have two ways to react; with weakness or with strength. The member for La Vérendrye recommends weakness.

Our government is taking a made-in-Canada approach, a made-in-Manitoba approach, and we are going to build, build, build.

So, next, let's talk about the member for Brandon West (Mr. Balcaen) announcing a partnership with a pro-Trump organization, who recently said, Praise the Lord, Hallelujah. Trump. This from the member for Brandon West. Absolutely mind-blowing, Honourable Speaker. Absolutely ridiculous, if I dare say.

Our government is a leader and is committed to reducing interprovincial trade barriers as a key tool in responding to Trump's tariffs. We are paving the way to create more jobs in Manitoba to ensure Manitobans have access to good jobs to build an even stronger economy.

Amongst the steps we are taking is working with other provinces, and we see that our Premier is often at work on this. We are going to collaborate on direct bilateral sales of alcoholic beverages to consumers, prioritizing mutual recognition to reduce unnecessary red tape. And we are going to work with other jurisdictions to reduce the administrative burden and adopt a national service standard for labour mobility. That is the work we are going to do.

In Manitoba, we have the lowest number of exemptions of any jurisdiction, and we are continuing to reduce them to improve interprovincial trade and grow Manitoba's economy. An economy, moreover—and the members across should know this—an economy that is not only bilingual, but that can work with other economies, other countries, and with the European Union. In fact, the ambassadors from the European Union were here just recently, and they asked us, When can we expect more trade with Europe?

So, we are open for business, from East to West and from North to South. We are even open to do business with other continents and other emerging economies: that is the approach we are going to take. I can imagine that the members across are feeling very vulnerable right now, because they know they are losing the battle. Manitobans are not listening to them. We have the most popular Premier (Mr. Kinew) in Canada right now.

Manitobans are listening to our efforts, and we are listening to Manitobans.

So, thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Once again: we will build, build, build a better Manitoba for all Manitobans.

Thank you, Honourable Speaker.

Hon. Ron Kostyshyn (Minister of Agriculture): I just wanted to put a few comments on record about the proposal that's being brought forward.

Through my last number of months of travelling throughout North America and spending the time down in the US, I had an opportunity at the SARL convention as one example of the great trading relationship we have.

And it's unfortunate that we've been challenged by the President of the USA, of the great working relationships that we've developed. And in fact, just last weekend, or last week, I attended the Manitoba Pork Council and I had the privilege to—of—sit with a delegate from Iowa pork, emphasizing the importance of our trade relationships that we have with Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota. We have Minneapolis, Minnesota.

So the opportunity is that we need to continue to work for the benefit of agriculture, the province's economy moving forward, in the long run. I know member opposite from Portage la Prairie tends to want to get some attention, so he'll be squawking once in a while, I would say, but kind of like the magpies of the world, so to speak, but definitely I see the importance, and we need to continue to focus on the importance of the economic development, Honourable Speaker, and I truly appreciate the opportunity.

But I want to bring forward some points that obviously the government—previous government that was in charge for seven and a half years. And what we've really witnessed—and my favourite subject, because—and obviously the members opposite are quite familiar what my favourite subject is when I get up to speak about agriculture—is the challenges of the

young agriculture producers in this province had to deal with, and continue to deal with, with the changing of the opportunities that really neglected their chance of a family farm to continue because they chose—chose—to allocate Crown lands was the size of the cheque. Nothing to do with the grandparents' or the parents' time that they put into that real estate for the better fit of the agriculture industry in those designated areas.

Honourable Speaker, I stress this importance because I really feel—because I spent 40 years of my life witnessing how important agriculture Crown lands is in the province of Manitoba, and those—opposition party, under the previous government, with a stroke of a pen, took that right away for young generational farmers.

And honestly, Honourable Speaker, what makes small towns grow is population, not size of corporations that take over massive land opportunities, that take away the right of generational farms. And yet, members opposite 'subconsciously' do not feel guilty of that decision.

And what's really ironic about all this is, if that was so important, why did Saskatchewan or Alberta, where they have Crown land, chose not to do the same direction? What that government chose to do is take a North Dakota model and felt that that was sufficient enough to warrant taking away a young individual's life of working on the family farm, that's been in the family farm for 100-and-some-odd years, Honourable Speaker.

And yet they turn around and want to hide behind a decision that—which they really felt was important. Well, to this day, when you have 250 representatives come out to a town hall meeting and not one of those across even attended that meeting, simply because of the sheer embarrassment by a decision or by the greed of a working relationship of an undercurrent to only benefit a—corporate farm opportunities and take away the values—[interjection]—of opportunities for the young agriculture producers in our province.

And to me, small communities are—[interjection]

The Speaker: Order, please.

The member for Portage la Prairie (MLA Bereza) will come to order. Just because he turns his back, he thinks I don't know that it's him? He will stop.

Mr. Kostyshyn: I get so passionate talking about it. I come from a community where small communities is the lifeblood of support of the rural agriculture area.

We are seeing communities now dying, simply because that freedom, that choice, that dream that the son or daughter had to become an agriculture producer was taken away, simply by a change of a policy that does not even exist in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

And they talk about, that's fairness? But they took a North Dakota model, so to be the right way, much like the Trump scenario that we're facing right now. Is that the model that that party across wants agriculture to go in the long run and provide economic spinoff for rural communities?

We are not in that position whatsoever, Honourable Speaker, and we will continue—we will continue—as a government to help out rural economic development, rural economic opportunities.

So I will say this, keeping our Crown lands freeze, we will continue until we have appropriate consultation and we talk to the people that are doing it today, and to me, that is full transparency of communication with the agriculture sector, such as the Crown lands opportunity.

That, to me, is the way it should have been done, not by a decision on a stroke of a pen and say to the generational farmers: sorry, you no longer have the authority of the Crown land; you do whatever you choose to do, but unfortunately—you will not have the opportunity to market.

Investing—we invested \$140 million in business risk program, and object—because of the tariff scenario, Honourable Speaker. We are standing up for agriculture. We're standing up for business opportunities. Added value opportunities exist in agriculture, and we're only at the tip of the iceberg of opportunity in agriculture.

And our intent is we build, build, build more towards the agriculture sector in the long run, and we will continue as a government to fight towards the benefit—

* (11:00)

The Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have three minutes remaining.

RESOLUTIONS

Res. 9—Recognizing Providence University College and Theological Seminary's 100th (Centennial) Anniversary

The Speaker: The hour is now 11 a.m. and the time for private members' resolutions.

The resolution before us this morning is the resolution on—resolution 9, recognizing—*[interjection]*. Order, please—Recognizing Providence University College and Theological Seminary's 100th (Centennial) Anniversary, brought forward by the honourable member for La Vérendrye.

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): I move, seconded by the member for Lakeside (Mr. King),

WHEREAS the year 2025 marks the 100th anniversary of Providence University College and Theological Seminary (Providence), an institution that has provided high quality, faith-centered post-secondary education in Manitoba since its founding in 1925 as the Winnipeg Bible Training School; and

WHEREAS Providence has grown from its humble beginnings in a house on Spence Street in Winnipeg, to a 100-acre campus in Otterburne and a new downtown campus in Winnipeg, enabling it to serve students from across Manitoba, Canada, and beyond; and

WHEREAS Providence was the first Bible school in Canada to grant bachelor's degrees in 1948, and has played a significant role in Manitoba's educational landscape by expanding program offerings, including aviation, business, science, and theological studies; and

WHEREAS Providence has served over 12,000 students over the past century, many of whom have gone on to contribute significantly to their communities, churches, and professions in Manitoba and across the world; and

WHEREAS Providence will host a centennial celebration weekend in commemoration of this historic milestone from September 5 to 7, 2025, featuring a gala, festival, and worship events to honour its rich historical legacy and ongoing mission of equipping students for leadership and service and helping them to understand their calling in a changing world.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recognize and congratulate Providence University College and Theological Seminary on its 100th anniversary and commend its

enduring contributions to higher education, leadership and faith-based learning in the province.

Motion presented.

Mr. Narth: Thank you to Kent and Ron, who we have with us here today in the gallery. It is a great honour to stand in this House and bring forward a resolution that recognizes the remarkable Providence University College and Theological Seminary's 100th anniversary.

For a century, Providence has been a beacon of learning and faith, shaping the lives of countless students who have passed through its doors, and I am proud to have this remarkable institution situated in the great constituency of La Vérendrye.

Founded in 1925, Providence University College began as a small educational institution grounded in Christian principles. Its founders envisioned a place where faith and economics could co-exist, fostering an environment for personal, intellectual and spiritual growth.

Over the decades, Providence has evolved, expanding and adapted to the changing needs of society while remaining true to its core mission: to develop students who are not only knowledgeable but also committed to serving others in their communities, and that they do.

I think it is safe to say that the mission of Providence is directly in line with who we are as Manitobans, and it is so refreshing to hear that students attending this school are going into our communities and making them a better place.

The college is committed to fostering an environment where students are encouraged to explore their potential and develop their unique gifts. This is accomplished through rigorous academic programs, vibrant campus life and opportunities for community involvement.

Students are empowered to engage thoughtfully in the world around them, preparing them for both professional careers and meaningful lives rooted in Christian values. From its early years in a modest building to its current vibrant campus in Otterburne, Providence has sure come a long way. The college first started on Spence Street right here in Winnipeg, where it continued to grow before finding itself at the current 100-acre vast campus in Otterburne, and now, expanding back to its roots with a downtown Winnipeg campus.

Along with growth and expansion has come many name changes to most closely represent the institution. The name hadn't become Providence College until 1958, and in 1996 was changed to Providence University College, highlighting the expansion into more comprehensive undergraduate institution.

Over the years, Providence has expanded its academic offerings significantly, establishing a diverse range of undergraduate programs across disciplines. The college now offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in fields such as arts, business, social sciences and theology, each designed to integrate faith with academic rigour.

A student's educational experience can develop much further than the degree offered through the university college, and students are able to lay the groundwork to pursue an education in anything from nursing to law.

Innovative learning has been a pillar in developing Providence throughout its history. Providence has continually embraced new methodologies and technologies in education. The commitment to innovative teaching strategies, experiential learning and community engagement has prepared students to meet the challenges of today's world.

Mr. Tyler Blashko, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

Providence has always prioritized service to others. From local outreach initiatives to international missions, the college has equipped students to make meaningful contributions to their communities. The transformative projects and partnerships formed over the years have reflected the institution's deep commitment to service and social justice.

Throughout its history, Providence has welcomed students from various cultural backgrounds, creating a diverse and inclusive campus environment. This diversity enriches the learning experience and promotes understanding and collaboration among its students.

What truly makes Providence special is its people. The dedication of faculty and staff has been instrumental in fostering an environment where students can thrive academically and spiritually. I have been able to see this first-hand, as someone touring the campus for the first time and not knowing anyone. Whether you are walking through the William Falk Library or the Reimer Student Life Centre, you will see students interacting with professors that care about not only the education of their students, but also the future of them. Their

unwavering support, mentorship and commitment to student success have created a legacy of excellence.

The success of their approach to education can easily be recognized when talking about alumni. Providence alumni have gone on to make significant contributions in various fields, including education, business, health care and ministry. They carry the values instilled in them during their time at Providence, making a lasting impact on their communities around the world.

As we celebrate this centennial, we honour the leaders, innovators and changemakers who have emerged from this institution. Each story adds a unique chapter to the Providence legacy, illustrating the enduring influence of a Providence education. As we celebrate the past it is also important to look to the future with hope and excitement. If the past can be a guiding light for the future of Providence, I am excited to see the growth. This is an institution that has been able to weather the test of time.

Through the past 100 years, everything across our great province has changed. This includes everything from the customs of how we interact to the way education is delivered in a classroom. During this time, the landscape of our province has truly changed. We have seen floods and droughts, economic depression and boom, global pandemics and war. But what has stayed the same is the guiding mission of Providence and the quality of education that is delivered.

The next ten–100 years present new challenges and opportunities. I know that Providence will continue to invest in innovative programs, forge partnerships with other institutions and explore new avenues to serve their students and the community better. We have seen this recently and throughout their history; most notably are the aircraft pilot program together with Harv's Air in Steinbach, and most recently, the practical nursing program together with Southern Health and the Assiniboine Community College.

* (11:10)

And I have seen first-hand how both of these programs have shaped the lives of many Manitobans. It is a willingness to adapt and the forward thinking to grow that makes programs like these possible.

With an emphasis on experiential learning, interdisciplinary studies and global engagement, Providence will empower the next generation of leaders equipped to navigate the complexities of our ever-changing world.

As I reflect now on the accomplishments of Providence University College and the expansive offerings in education, I think it is appropriate that Providence receives its deserved recognition by providing it with full university status. In 2023, the former PC government sponsored a private member's bill seeing full university status to coincide with the anniversary we are celebrating today.

Providence has touched the lives of thousands of students, educators and community members, instilling in them the values of faith, integrity and service. Let us honour the legacy of Providence by continuing to support and nurture this institution, ensuring it thrives for generations to come.

Here is to 100 years of excellence and to many more years of transforming lives through education and faith.

Thank you, Providence university, for being part of a bright and strong future in Manitoba.

Introduction of Guests

The Deputy Speaker: Before we move on to questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us Dr. Kent Anderson, president, Providence University College and Theological Seminary, and Mr. Ron Hogue, vice-president, advancement, Providence University College and Theological Seminary, who are the guests of the honourable member for La Vérendrye.

Questions

The Deputy Speaker: A question period of up to 10 minutes will be held, and questions may be addressed in the following sequence: the first question may be asked by a member from another party; any subsequent questions must follow a rotation between parties; each independent member may ask one question. And no question or answer shall exceed 45 seconds.

MLA Shannon Corbett (Transcona): Post-secondary institutions make invaluable contributions to our province. Celebrating 100 years of educating Manitoba leaders of tomorrow, what contributions have Providence University College made that has impacted the member opposite the most?

Mr. Konrad Narth (La Vérendrye): Thank you for—the member across the way for Transcona for the great question.

As Providence University College is situated in La Vérendrye, I see the leaders within my community and the communities around us, how they've been impacted by those leaders receiving education through Providence University College.

Further to that, most recently, the nursing program that was carried out through the university has had tremendous impact in local nurses obtaining their training and going on to practising in southeast Manitoba.

Mr. Josh Guenter (Borderland): I want to thank my colleague and friend, the member for La Vérendrye (Mr. Narth) for bringing this important bill forward and also welcome our guests to the Chamber today.

I'd like to ask my colleague whether he can talk about what inspired him to bring this resolution forward.

Mr. Narth: Thank you to my colleague for Borderland for the question.

Part of my role as an MLA is to advocate for my constituents, and that includes those attending and working at Providence University College. Similar to the question from the member for Transcona (MLA Corbett), I've been able to see first-hand the impact that this university college has had on Manitobans. It's a unique education institution providing a faith-based education delivery, shaping the lives of many Manitobans in a unique way, that's able to provide—

The Deputy Speaker: The member's time has expired.

MLA Corbett: Just building on what the member opposite has said, they've talked about the uniqueness of Providence college.

Can you talk about that uniqueness in terms of how it's impacted your constituency directly?

Mr. Narth: Thank you to the member from Transcona for that question.

Definitely, there are many examples. Providence University College has a presence in the community. The administration plays a vital role in community development. The organizations and activities that are carried out in those communities—and the students are encouraged to be part of the constituency and the community that that constituency includes. So it has had a beneficial impact on La Vérendrye.

The Deputy Speaker: I'll remind all honourable members to direct comments through the Chair.

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): It's honour me—for me to speak on this today. Providence college has had a bit—big impact in my community and as well as a lot of people that I love that have been able to go school there.

Can the member share with the House what the impact has been having Providence University College located in our—in his constituency and in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Narth: I think the impact to Manitoba has been significant. This institution has been able to provide a unique educational experience providing the academic groundwork but also the faith knowledge that helps to shape good community members that go out into all areas of our great province.

MLA Corbett: My question for the member opposite is, how will they be celebrating the centennial anniversary of Providence University College?

Mr. Narth: Thank you to the member from Transcona for that question.

This fall, there is going to be an extravagant display of celebration at the university college's—Providence University College's campus, at the beautiful campus in Otterburne, and I encourage everyone to attend and join me in celebrating the great accomplishments of this institution.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): I thank my friend from La Vérendrye for this resolution.

The former member for Rossmere brought forward a bill to give full status—university status to Providence college, which almost passed the House; it got to third reading. Can the member explain why he thinks now it's important that Providence college seminary university fully obtains that full status?

Mr. Narth: Thank you to the member from Steinbach for that great question.

I think this is the greatest time; celebrating the centennial 100th anniversary of Providence college, there would be no better time to recognize the university for truly who it is and what it contributes. Full university status will achieve that, and I think the time is right for a well-deserving institution that has been a pillar of education in our province.

MLA Corbett: Over their seven and half years in government, the PCs shrunk funding for public universities' operating grants by \$14.2 million. Our government is investing in post-secondary education with stable, predictable funding because we know that

when we invest in these institutions we are investing in the future of Manitoba.

My question for the member opposite: Why did the PC government fail to adequately fund post-secondary education in Manitoba?

* (11:20)

Mr. Narth: I guess, thank you to the member from Transcona for the slightly misleading question.

But when our PC government was in power, Manitoba post-secondary institutions were funded to the tune of close to \$1 billion and Providence University College benefited from our government funding, including a record number of dollars towards scholarships and bursaries.

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further questions—the member for Dawson Trail (MLA Lagassé).

The member for Steinbach.

Mr. Goertzen: Providence has a long reputation of doing a great job with international students—and not to make this political, I know that the NDP maybe hasn't prioritized the allocation of international students to places like Providence—but for the benefit of the government, in a non-political question, could the member describe the importance of international students for Providence and what a great job they do of training those students?

Mr. Narth: Great question. One thing that Providence University College does extremely well is train international students to go back and contribute to their communities around the world in a positive way.

The impact to recent changes is significant for Providence. They've gone from having more than 1,500 international students to now around 100. The impact is significant, that's a significant impact to funding, and I encourage this NDP government to look to the importance of Providence University College and properly fund them in a deserving way.

MLA Corbett: Post-secondary education should be accessible to all students. However, students were forced to bear the brunt of the PC government's cuts to post-secondary education in Manitoba by paying higher costs and being left with fewer resources.

My question for the member opposite is: Why did they make post-secondary education less accessible for students in Manitoba by raising costs.

Mr. Narth: I'd like to reiterate that \$1 billion was spent by our previous PC government towards

universities and colleges, including Providence University College. I urge the member to make sure that the Minister of Advanced Education doesn't pick winners and losers when funding all post-secondary institutions and remember Providence University College in that funding model.

Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: Well, it's unfortunate, but the time for questions has expired.

Debate

The Deputy Speaker: But the floor is open for debate.

Mrs. Rachelle Schott (Kildonan-River East): It's always an honour and a privilege to stand up in this House and put a few words on record on behalf of my constituents of Kildonan-River East.

Just want to give a huge shout-out and acknowledgement, through the Chair, of course, but to the guests in the gallery that are here today for this big, exciting anniversary—100 years is a huge accomplishment, so just wanted to, on behalf of our government, just celebrate and acknowledge that—its achievement.

Just, you know, acknowledge that Providence was the first Bible school in Canada to grant bachelor's degrees in 1948. That's a huge, significant milestone.

And, you know, to hear and learn more about the centennial celebration weekend commemoration of this historic milestone this year, really appreciate this being brought to the Chamber so we can highlight you folks and hear more about this.

You know, Providence University College and seminary has reached this milestone, preparing leaders of tomorrow in Manitoba for 100 years. However, even though some folks across the way tried to say politely, muffle their comments by saying they're trying not to go political—they did, however.

So we do have to acknowledge that the failed Pallister-Stefanson government failed to adequately fund all post-secondary education for seven and a half years, not cherry-picking like they are accusing us of doing. And they managed to do—was cut and freeze and interfere with collective bargaining that affected all institutions, especially and including one such as Providence.

Unlike the previous government, our NDP government is investing in our post-secondary institutions with stable and predictable funding because we value

what you bring to our province. So thank you for the work that you do each and every day to help, as I said, prepare leaders of tomorrow here in Manitoba.

Faith-based institutions are doing good work on reconciliation. I know that—this from interacting and speaking to a number of folks in the faith-based community. Just this past weekend, the member for Transcona (MLA Corbett) and myself attended, on behalf of the Province, a Calvin Christian dinner.

There was only us from the government side actually there. That was very interesting that no one from—anyone else in the Chamber from the other side was there, with all of the talk about supporting faith-based institutions and education opportunities.

But, you know, Calvin in particular has this very beautiful, touching land acknowledgement, where they intertwined the right way to move forward on reconciliation but still encompassing a lot of their faith-based Biblical teachings, and it was really, really special and touching.

And I mentioned in my remarks at the dinner that, you know, it was a bittersweet evening, to be there, just like a—the 100th anniversary of such an amazing thing as such as the Providence celebration, was that this particular dinner was a 65th anniversary.

So institutions don't get to big milestones such as this without having bumps and hurdles along the way, and making changes to keep up with changes in the times, such as incorporating reconciliation into the ways that they continue on with educating leaders of tomorrow.

Our—last year I attended with our late colleague, Minister Altomare, and he would always talk about how proud he was to be the MLA for one particular faith-based school in his area and say, you know, how they had so many signs on the lawn for Orange Shirt Day and how they—that particular school was doing the great work on reconciliation.

So I know that Providence has been around for 100 great years, and, you know, things have come this far because you are keeping up with the times and changing and learning and growing along. So I—we—on behalf of our government, we really appreciate your learning and growing and support to reconciliation.

So again, we just want to definitely celebrate and acknowledge this huge milestone. I know that sometimes it can feel like we're alone on this faith journey and not everyone is in support, but I think that

a lot of folks, you know, express their different faith journeys privately and—but just know that we want to make sure that more leaders of tomorrow are prepared for the workforce and our government is definitely wanting to prepare many, many more leaders of tomorrow here and including Providence. So once again, congratulations on this big milestone.

Everyone deserves to—access to post-secondary education, but again, the previous failed PC government only made it harder for people to access post-secondary at all institutions in Manitoba, and that would ultimately include Providence. Our NDP government is working hard to make post-secondary education more accessible, so that's lowering costs for students and investing in Manitoba's post-secondary institutions.

So, you know, for another example of a post-secondary institution, we partnered with Yellowquill university to provide degree-granting status for its First Nations bachelor of education program because we know it's important to recognize the valuable work of that institution, just like the one—Providence—of the folks that join us today here.

And, you know, during the Throne Speech, we had some students from Riverbend elementary school come and sing from the Ojibwe language program, and one of the teachers—student teachers that was here is actually a student at Yellowquill, and she shared with some of us how this partnership with Yellowquill now providing the degree-granting status is just totally life-changing because there were so many different times like any student in post-secondary, whether it's at Yellowquill or Providence or any other post-secondary institution in Manitoba, where you at times want to give up because it's just so overwhelming and there's a lot of hurdles along the way.

* (11:30)

But it's with supportive, you know, teachers and educators and colleagues at Yellowquill and Providence, it keeps you rooted. And I know that Providence having a faith-based education is something that definitely helps folks along the way to feel like they're supported when there's definitely tough times throughout their educational journey.

You know, our government's supporting students by investing \$10.5 million to Manitoba scholarship and bursary initiative, making \$30 million in scholarships, bursaries and grants available to them. So that's not the wild accusations from across the way, saying we're picking winners and losers; that's just available

for Manitoba students so that more and more leaders of tomorrow can be successful here in Manitoba.

We're investing an additional \$100,000 to Research Manitoba to support research, capacity building and infrastructure investments after it was cut by members opposite when they were in government.

So it's pretty easy to make commentary now about, you know, things that are allegedly being done but those—that's just the fact of the matter, that for seven and a half years, there was freezes and cuts in the post-secondary system.

So Budget 2025 invests \$10 million for the ongoing expansion of the University of Manitoba campus to train more doctors, for example. And, you know, our government values post-secondary education including institutions located beyond the Perimeter, so like Providence University College.

So, just, once again, want to give you folks that join us today and all of your colleagues back at school, thank you so much for the great work that you do every day to support all of your faculty and students on their faith-based journey through post-secondary, and we look forward to another hundred years or whatever your future looks like.

So thank you so much, honourable Speaker.

Mrs. Carrie Hiebert (Morden-Winkler): It's a great honour for me to stand up today and speak on this resolution, and thanks to my colleague for bringing this forward.

Providence University College and Theological Seminary, as it celebrates its centennial anniversary, it's made a big impact in many people that I know and their lives, and in the community and in our province of Manitoba, so thank you for bringing this forward. As we celebrate the anniversary marking 100 years of faith-centred education and community service in Manitoba, it's a huge milestone so congratulations.

Founded in 1925 as Winnipeg's Bible training school, Providence has grown from a modest institution into a vibrant university, offering wide range of accredited undergraduate, graduate and theological programs.

As Providence celebrates its centennial, we honour the leadership and thank you for being here today. That means a lot to all of us. We honour the facility, the faculty, staff and students who educate or whose dedication is driven to its success, and who have spent time investing and educating our children, our families and those in our province of Manitoba.

The institution remains committed to expanding its opportunities and education. Fieldwork, athletics, the community—and community engagement, ensuring a lasting impression and impact on future generations to come.

Providence impact on Manitoba is profound. The institution has been instrumental in training leaders who serve in churches, schools and various community organizations across this province. Its commitment to academic excellence and community service has enriched Manitoba's educational landscape and strengthens its social fabric.

And I appreciate that specifically. I have young people in my life that I know very closely who have been going to Providence, and the joy that they receive when they go there, they get to take the classes, they get to learn and get their degrees and they get to enjoy the arts at the same time.

One of them specifically has been part of a theatrical group and she's just loving it, and she just enjoys it, and she was in the group and now she actually volunteers and helps run the group, so it's really exciting to see.

To commemorate this milestone, Providence is hosting a series of centennial events from September 5 to 7 in 2025. I encourage everyone to get involved and participate. The celebration will include a gala at RBC Convention Centre in Winnipeg, a homecoming weekend on the Otterburne Campus and a special music and chapel service. I think these are such important things for us to engage in and show our support for those that are working hard to educate our young people and our future leaders.

As Providence looks to the future, it remains dedicated to its mission of growing students in knowledge and character through leadership and service. The centennial celebrations is not just a reflection on the past, but a commitment to continue shaping the leaders who will make a positive impact in Manitoba and beyond, both in rural areas and in the cities.

Providence university offers a diverse array of programs that integrate academic excellence with Christian faith. These programs are designed to cultivate both intelligent—intellectual growth and spiritual development, and this is something that we really need to make sure we offer and continue to support.

Providence provides undergraduate degrees in various fields, including aviation; business administration; communications and media; psychology, including different courses where they offer

counselling, and we all know that we have a real lack of mental health support workers in our province right now and this is something we need to really foster and support in our schools and in our universities.

They offer environmental sciences, which is something very close to what a lot of people are thinking about right now, is how to make a positive impact in our world.

Humanities: English literature, history, philosophy; understanding the human culture and thought, which is something that we really need more of in our province and in this day and age.

Intercultural studies: They examine cultural differences and interactions, preparing students for the global engagement and for engaging in those in our very province.

These programs are—sorry, designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed for various careers, all within Christian-centred framework. It's something that we really appreciate about Providence college is their faith-based education.

Providence also offers specialized programs that Vegas—focus on ministry and theological studies; for example, a bachelor of 'theology.' This prepares students for service in churches and faith-based organizations with tracks in pastoral ministries, youth leadership, worship studies, Christian education and church administration.

They also offer—which is an incredible program—a master's of divinity. It provides advanced theological education, with specializations in areas such as English—the English Bible; other studies including Biblical languages, pastoral counselling, different—other studies in youth—in also youth ministry opportunities. These programs are designed to deepen students' understanding of the Christian theology and prepare them for leadership roles within the church and the broader faith of the communities.

Whether they're pursuing a career in aviation, in business, media or ministry, Providence college offers programs that integrate academic rigour with a commitment to Christian values, preparing students to lead with character and faith.

And so, as you can see, Providence isn't just a Bible school; it is an all-around education that you get, whether—whatever it is that you're looking to go into, you can get your degree and you can have those values that you appreciate, or learn more about those values.

So I want to thank you very much, again, to my colleague for bringing this forward. I know that my community of Morden-Winkler really appreciates this school. We have a—we have many students that go there, and there's many students in rural Manitoba, as well as many students from Winnipeg and other cities, that attend Providence college.

And they've had nothing but great experiences there, and I just want to encourage and congratulate the school for your hard work and for your continued effort to mold and help—to help mold and encourage and build our young, youth leaders and—for our future.

Thank you.

* (11:40)

MLA David Pankratz (Waverley): It's always an honour to rise in this Chamber and speak to resolutions and bills, and it's a privilege to rise today in recognition of Providence college as they celebrate 100 years of education and faith and service here in Manitoba.

And you know, as someone with deep Mennonite roots in this province, a tradition that, like Providence, values community and service and faith, I really understand how faith-based institutions can play such a meaningful role in shaping lives and building a better world.

You know, my family actually came to this country generations ago in search of a place, ultimately, where they could practise their faith freely, where they could build communities and raise their families.

And in fact, my great-grandfather J.J. Thiessen was one of the founding member—or members of what was then known as the Canadian Mennonite Bible College, which today is known as Canadian Mennonite University.

So he believed, as so many in our community did, that education that was rooted in faith and compassion could really transform not only individual lives but entire communities.

And he understood that the world wouldn't stay the same, and that if you want your values to endure, you need to make space for the next generation to ask new questions and wrestle with some big ideas and maybe even challenge old assumptions. And that kind of leadership is really about preparing the ground so others can rise, right?

And I also want to just mention that that tradition carried on with faith-based institutions, and my father taught at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate for 40 years. My uncle also taught at Winnipeg Mennonite elementary school for quite a few years, and I think is back in a role there, so shout-out to Doug Pankratz, who's back in as the music teacher there.

But, you know, I just—I want to say, you know, I was speaking about CMU—I think a quick shout-out to the Providence Pilots, the women's volleyball team. Unfortunately for my family, with the connection to CMU, they beat the CMU Blazers I believe, in the final, just recently. And I know they've gone back and forth with their championships, so both strong programs, but congrats this year to the Providence Pilots for the big win.

You know, and I guess on that note, it should be—on this 100th anniversary resolution that we're speaking of, I do want to also mention the numerous sports programs that are available at Providence, which—I was looking this up—you've got basketball, cross-country, I believe they even have futsal which my son will be very excited about, very much into soccer and futsal, and also volleyball.

So these are all exciting athletic endeavours for students to take part in. And I will also note that I know—and we're talking about a bill this afternoon that actually about psychological health in the workplace. And recreational activities are such an important part in finding that balance.

I know that at Providence college, they have a pretty outstanding disc-golf course and I hope that it's still there on site, because I have heard it's a pretty good one.

So as I was reading through some of the mission statements and values, I saw so many notes of the spirits I was talking about with my own family. You know, the values and statements commit to diversity of thoughts, of community and exploration, which are values that, you know, when you truly live those out, they demand so much courage and generosity, and it really means more than tolerating difference, right, it means actively creating space for those conversations, for those experiences, ideas, identities that have often been pushed to the margins.

And that's why these—or these post-secondary institutions are so important for our province.

So looking through some of the course offerings, Providence also—they built a reputation not just for their theological education, but also for some pretty

exciting and innovative programs, like their aviation program. And I know as the military envoy, I've had the opportunity to hear lots about the tech space and aerospace and I know that there's a lot of need for folks to be coming out trained in aviation.

I bumped into a friend recently from the fire department who, two out her—two out of his three daughters are actually now working as pilots in aviation, and they're incredible careers for the two of them. So I commend Providence on putting forth that program with aviation specifically.

There—so I guess with that they have a partnership with Harv's Air in Steinbach, which is fantastic. And they come from—people come from all over the place to take this course, and they end up trained as commercial or military or medevac or missionary pilots, so it's very, very exciting to me.

And I do just want to quickly mention, on that note of investment, that we—our minister made a very exciting announcement, I think a few months back now, actually, investing in Magellan and StandardAero, and I was fortunate enough to go out and tour that plant and see some of the work that Magellan is doing. It's really incredible.

And so, again, bringing that back to Providence, I'm so happy to hear that they are offering programs like this in a rapidly growing space for our economy here in Manitoba.

I will also say, you know, as their mission statement reminds us, and I was enjoying reading through that, that we're called to grow leaders for a changing world, right, and we know the world is always changing and new voices emerge; new questions are asked; truths that were once ignored are named at times and, you know, the leaders that we need today are those who have that flexibility in their thoughts and understand that leadership means lifting up all people, right, regardless of who they are, how they pray or even who they love. And I really commend Providence for having that in their mission statements that I found.

So it's leaders who ultimately recognize that freedom means both the freedom to live with dignity and the freedom from prejudice and fear and exclusion. And that to me, in my personal humble experience, is what faith calls us to, right?

And speaking of that, how I grew up, you know, with faith in the family, with the Mennonite background, it really wasn't something that was terribly fragile, right, or meant to be sheltered; it was one of

those things that got argued about at the dinner table and, you know, we had some difficult conversations, and it was important. It was something meant to be, like, lived out in public through acts of kindness and service and by standing up to those who left—who were left out—or standing up for those who were left out and—left behind, right? And it meant opening up doors, extending a hand, right, and building a bigger table, right, where no one had to leave part of themselves outside in order to be welcomed in.

And so, again, I just I commend the mission statement of Providence on their 100th anniversary for naming those values in their mission. And as they embark on their second century, I really hope that their community continues to lean into those commitments in word and in action because, ultimately, and we know this in government, the true test of any institution or government or province, really, or character, is not found only in how it serves those who are already at the table but also in how it makes room for those still waiting for the invitation.

And while I never had the chance to sit down and speak with my great-grandfather—I was two at the time, I believe, when he passed away—I'd like to think that he would have believed, as I do, that faith and education are at their strongest when they make that space for everyone and all ideas, when they lift up not just those already seated, as I said, but those still on the outside looking in, because, ultimately, I would say true leadership and a sign of a great institution is about building a really big welcoming table for everyone to sit at, right?

And here in Manitoba, I know at Providence, we're building a province, and then an institution, where freedom and dignity and opportunity are rights for everyone. And that work takes those leaders, ultimately, who see people not as problems necessarily to be solved but as neighbours to be lifted up and for ideas to be shared.

And so I am so pleased today to have had this opportunity to speak on Providence college and their 100 years of contribution to our province. And let's also look ahead, right, to a future that's shaped by some of the values listed in their mission statement of compassion and courage and the kind of leadership that ensures no one is left behind.

So, congratulations to Providence college on this remarkable milestone, and thank you, honourable Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Kelvin Goertzen (Steinbach): Thank you, Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to say a few words this morning to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Providence college and university. And I want to thank my friend from La Vérendrye for bringing forward the resolution.

* (11:50)

The comments by the member for Waverley (MLA Pankratz), I think, were timely and I think that they were helpful, and I was glad that they were non-political, because I have certainly heard some comments from members from Transcona and Kildonan-River East which I think didn't align with the spirit of this particular resolution. And I think we should follow the example of Providence college university in being unpartisan, in reaching out across all political and other aspects of life.

I remember clearly former Liberal Member of Parliament, David Iftody visiting Providence college. I think it was actually a speaker's series named after him for some time at Providence after that. Of course, Vic Toews was a strong supporter of Providence. I know that Ted Falk has continued on as well.

In fact, members of the Chamber—some I remember but not many, I don't think—that the former NDP MLA for Burrows, Doug Martindale brought forward a bill that changed the name of Providence to add university to the name of what was then simply the college.

And then, of course, it was talked about earlier on about the former Progressive Conservative MLA, Andrew Mickelfield who brought forward a bill to give full university recognition to Providence.

So you can see how Liberals and New Democrats and Progressive Conservatives have shaped what is now Providence because they have reached across all political lines, and all political parties have recognized the value of what Providence does.

And what Providence does, of course, is more than just providing an academic foundation for its students, although, of course, it does that as well.

But it reaches beyond that. And what I've always appreciated visiting the campus, and particularly the students, and having the opportunity to speak at one of their graduations, was that you get the sense that the academic foundation, whether they're going into business or whether they're going to be going to aviation or now perhaps nursing, that those are

important, of course, things to give the foundational ability to perform those occupations.

But Providence is trying to do more than that. They're trying to ensure that these are good citizens who, when they're going to the workplace, are adding more value than just the work that they are providing.

I think if you talk to employers who have employed those who have graduated or gone to Providence, they would say that; that more than just being proficient in the particular skill that they were trained in, they add something to the workplace beyond that: in the manner in which they conduct themselves, in their collegiality, in their kindness and thoughtfulness for those who are around them. And a lot of those values were developed at Providence.

And so I think that that's one of the great things about this particular institution, is it goes beyond just the academic nature of what we look at. I also know that they've done a very good job of expanding their footprint from their foundation into Winnipeg and they see that as an important part of their future.

They want to be part of the revitalization that needs to happen in Winnipeg. We see that through educational institutions. We see that through sporting institutions.

And we know that a vibrant downtown Winnipeg is a part of a vibrant Manitoba, and Providence wants to be part of ensuring that the downtown, the core of Winnipeg is something that draws people to it, whether than stops people from coming to it.

So I think that the Province and the government should look at that as well; that it's also an economic model and it's also a model to help build downtown Winnipeg beyond just the Otterburne campus, which is, of course, itself is a spectacular part of Otterburne.

And then the issue of international students, of course: this is a topical issue in Canada right now and I want to separate it from immigration, which I know sometimes is a divisive issue for people.

But the issue around training international students is separate and apart from that, and it's a critical for Providence, not just from an economic perspective—although I don't think anybody would deny there's an element of that—but from an experiential perspective, of the experience that all students receive when there are those who are coming from other parts of the world to get their training, get their education in Manitoba at Providence. It benefits the entire student life.

Many students and the faculty come from the city of Steinbach and the area that I represent and I know, in particular, in speaking to them, that it is part of what Providence is. So I would encourage the Province to recognize that and to consider that when they're doing allocations for international students.

So I'll conclude my comments in the way I began them, in a very non-partisan way and to say congratulations to Providence college on 100 years. We look forward to celebrating with you later in the year at your gala celebration.

We know that God and divine providence has brought you to this point, and we know that in trusting in Him and in that guidance, that you'll have many more years of a success.

So thank you, Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to say those few words.

MLA JD Devgan (McPhillips): It's a privilege to rise today to put a few words on the record, and I'll start by actually sincerely congratulating Providence college on their centennial anniversary.

Certainly a noteworthy and remarkable achievement considering the fact that they were the first Bible school in Canada to grant bachelor degrees.

And, obviously, we recognize that post-secondaries have a critical role in our society and our economy, not only creating the future workforce and the employees of tomorrow but also benefitting society in the way that we understand one another and want to understand some of our challenges in society. And there is a space, of course, for faith-based institutions in our society as well.

As a personal note, I'm sure not too many people know this in the Chamber, but I attended a Christian school for two years in grades—I believe it was 6 and 7. I attended Faith Academy, and that was quite informative for me to understand some core tenets of the Christian faith.

And some of the things that I took away there were the focus on compassion and creating a society where those who are maybe left behind and are unloved and those who are forgotten, perhaps, have a space in our society. And just having space within our own hearts to hold compassion for our neighbours. I believe the phrase is: love thy neighbour.

But I just wanted to also make a note, as well, having worked in the post-secondary sector prior to coming to this Chamber, I have a pretty unique understanding and appreciation for the role all post-secondaries have in our society as well as, you

know, the other universities that we have in our province. My colleague from Waverley mentioned CMU and the important role they have there.

So I'm just looking at the clock here, recognizing that we're a little bit short on time, but I just want to close by saying congratulations to Providence on their centennial anniversary.

Thank you, honourable Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: Seeing no further speakers.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the resolution? *[Agreed]*

I declare the resolution carried.

Hon. Matt Wiebe (Acting Government House Leader): Is there will of the House to call it 12 o'clock?

The Deputy Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 12 o'clock? *[Agreed]*

The hour being 12 p.m., the House is recessed and stands recessed until 1:30 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 17, 2025

CONTENTS

ORDERS OF THE DAY		Resolutions	
PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS		Res. 9—Recognizing Providence University College and Theological Seminary's 100th (Centennial) Anniversary	
Second Readings—Public Bills		Narth	1414
Bill 227—The Free Trade and Mobility Within Canada Act		Questions	
Stone	1403	Corbett	1416
Questions		Narth	1416
Compton	1405	Guenter	1417
Stone	1405	Hiebert	1417
Bereza	1405	Goertzen	1417
Balcaen	1406	Debate	
Debate		Schott	1418
Moses	1407	Hiebert	1420
Bereza	1409	Pankratz	1421
Loiselle	1410	Goertzen	1423
Kostyshyn	1413	Devgan	1424

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<http://www.manitoba.ca/legislature/hansard/hansard.html>